

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

HA-05 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /083 W

-----082113 230545Z /17

R 221205Z MAY 78

FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2925

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT,SF

SUBJ: POLICE HARASS INKATHA LEADER; BUTHELEZI PROTESTS TO SAG

1. GIBSON THULA, INKATHA'S URBAN REPRESENTATIVE AND ONE OF BUTHELEZI'S TOP LIEUTENANTS, WAS STOPPED BY POLICE IN TRANSVAAL LATE MAY 13 WHILE RETURNING TO HIS SOWETO HOME IN A KWAZULU OFFICIAL VEHICLE. THULA, IN PRESS REPORTS AND IN A CONVERSATION WITH US, CLAIMS TWO WHITE POLICEMEN STOPPED HIS CAR AT A ROAD-BLOCK, ASSAULTED HIS DRIVER, FORCED THEIR WAY INTO THE CAR, BROKE OPEN THE GLOVE BOX AND TRUNK SEARCHING FOR DOCUMENTS, THEN DROVE THE PAIR TO A POLICE STATION WHERE THEY WERE DETAINED FOR THREE HOURS. DURING A VERBAL ALTERCATION OUTSIDE THE POLICE STATION THULA SAID HE THREW HIS ARMS IN THE AIR AND SAID "OH, MY GOD, WHEN IS THIS ALL GOING TO END". HE THEREUPON WAS CHARGED WITH BLASPHEMY IN A PUBLIC PLACE, THE ONLY CHARGE MADE AGAINST HIM OR HIS DRIVER DURING THE ENTIRE INCIDENT. THULA CLAIMS HIS DRIVER SUSTAINED FACIAL INJURIES AND REQUESTED HE BE SEEN BY A POLICE SURGEON. THE SURGEON

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AT FIRST SAID HE COULD FIND NOTHING WRONG WITH THE DRIVER BUT THULA INSISTED THE MAN'S FACE WAS SWOLLEN AND THE SURGEON RELUCTANTLY LISTED IT ON THE REPORT. THULA TOLD THE SURGEON AND THE ASSEMBLED POLICE THAT THE SURGEON'S ACTIONS WERE REMINISCENT OF THE BIKO CASE AND THAT HE INTENDED TO INFORM THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE SURGEON'S CONDUCT. THE PAIR WAS RELEASED AT 0300 ON MAY 14 BUT THULA MUST APPEAR JUNE 15

ON THE SWEARING CHARGE.

2. THE AFTERNOON AFTER THEIR RELEASE THULA LAID CHARGES OF ASSAULT AGAINST THE POLICEMEN INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK ON THE DRIVER. UPON LEARNING OF THE INCIDENT CHIEF BUTHELEZI TOLD THE KWAZULU ASSEMBLY HE WOULD PROTEST THULA'S TREATMENT TO THE SAG.

3. COMMENT: WHILE THIS IS THE SECOND ARREST OF A SENIOR INKATHA FIGURE IN RECENT MONTHS WE DO NOT THINK IT NECESSARILY INDICATES AN SAG CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MOVEMENT. THE FIRST DETENTION (OE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBER H.J. BHENGU) WAS SOMEWHAT UNIQUE (DURBAN 217). IN THE MORE RECENT ACTION, THULA HIMSELF DOES NOT BELIEVE THE POLICE WERE LOOKING FOR HIM BUT WERE MERELY STOPPING ALL CARS DRIVEN BY BLACKS IN A SECURITY CHECK. HE SAID IT WASN'T UNTIL HE SPOKE TO A CAPTAIN AT THE POLICE STATION THAT ANYONE REALIZED WHO HE WAS. HE ALSO TOLD US HE WAS LATER VISITED BY A POLICE BRIGADIER INVESTIGATING HIS CHARGES AGAINST THE TWO WHITE OFFICERS. THE GRADE OF THE INVESTIGATING OFFICER MAY INDICATE SAG SENSITIVITY OVER POLICE HANDLING OF THE MATTER.
FARBER

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